

Chronic Diseases Are Costly, Disabling, and Deadly It's Time to Pay Attention



Chronic diseases are among the most common and costly health conditions in the U.S and are the leading causes of death and disability in the nation and in South Carolina. Almost half of all Americans and 80% of older adults have at least one chronic condition, such as arthritis, cancer, diabetes, heart disease and stroke, and lung disease. In South Carolina, chronic diseases make up seven of the top 10 leading causes of death.

With the aging population, the number of people living with chronic conditions will increase dramatically in the coming years and place an unprecedented burden on the health care system unless prevention is placed as a top priority.

Evidence-based prevention programs for chronic disease self-management and exercise have been proven as an effective means of preventing and managing chronic conditions and helping older adults to remain independent in their own homes.

Arthritis Facts

- Arthritis is the most common cause of disability in the U.S. - ahead of more visible health issues, such as heart disease, diabetes, chronic lung disease and high blood pressure.
- Arthritis affects almost one third of SC adults.
- Arthritis and related disabilities result in estimated annual medical care costs of \$1.3 billion and estimated total costs (medical care and lost productivity) are \$2.1 billion in SC annually.

Cancer Facts

- More than 11,000 new cases of cancer are diagnosed in SC each year.
- Cancer in-patient care costs \$700 million annually.
- Cancer is the leading cause of death for adults 65 and over in SC.

Diabetes Facts

- Diabetes affects 1 of every 10 SC adults and 1 out of every 5 SC adults 65 and over.
- The cost of in-patient care and ER visits for diabetes amounts to more than \$300 million in SC each year.
- Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in SC.

Heart Disease and Stroke Facts

- More than a third of SC adults have high blood pressure, and 43% have high cholesterol.
- Hospitalizations for heart disease cost more than \$2.7 billion and for stroke cost \$400 million each year.
- Heart disease is the second and stroke is the 4th leading cause of death for adults 65 and over in SC.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary/Lung Disease (COPD/COLD) Facts

- COPD is responsible for more than 16,000 hospitalizations and 40,000 visits to the ER in SC annually.
- COPD inpatient and ER visits cost more than \$436 million in SC in 2008.
- COPD is the third leading cause of death in SC adults 65 and over.